

APPROVED JANUARY 24, 2023

Montgomery County Community Action Board
Zoom Meeting
November 29, 2022

MINUTES

CAB Members in Attendance: Elaine Carballo, Valerie Chatfield-Smith, Lisa Conlon, Erika Conner, Denise Fredericks, Jeffery Johnson, Will Kenlaw, Pamela Luckett, Evelyn Okutu, Myriam Paul, Timothy Robinson, Claudia Simmons, and Zelda Wafer-Jones

CAB Members Absent: Lisette Orellana Engel, Danette Lawrence, Eneshal Miller, and Mike Subin

CAA Staff: Sharon Strauss, Charlene Muhammad, Aizat Oladapo, and Leah Goldfine

Guests: Betty Smith, Commission on Health

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm.

Consent Agenda

Zelda moved to approve the consent agenda. Claudia seconded the motion and all voted in favor. The consent agenda included the minutes from the October 25, 2022 CAB meeting, the meeting evaluations summary from the October 25, 2022 meeting, the Executive Director's Report, Head Start Report, Contracts Report, Staff Liaison's Report, Head Start incident reports, TESS report, VITA report, Budget update, CAI Pre-Program Survey, CAB Testimony: Joint Delegation Hearing, Information for BCC members, Presentation: CAA Overview from Contract Partners Meeting, and Presentation: CAA Highlights from Contract Partners Meeting.

CAB Updates

Board members welcomed Evelyn Okutu, who was appointed to the CAB as a Head Start representative serving in the low-income sector.

Staff informed board members that there is a new required ethics training for all members of boards, committees, and commissions. The training is available online. Board members must upload their certificates of completion to the County Executive's website.

Staff updated the board on the CAI, which is going very well. A workshop would be held that Saturday focusing on key advocacy issues selected by participants.

Will provided an overview of a new grant opportunity from the Department of Transportation. The department has \$800,000 available for grants to cover operating and capital budgets. Capital funding would cover the cost of vehicles to provide transportation and operating funds would cover the cost of labor/personnel needed to implement the programs. Nonprofits can apply for grants to cover the cost

of transportation for lower-income residents to access services. An information session would be held on December 5 and the grant application deadline was December 28. Will noted that this grant program came about as a result of fees people pay for ride sharing services. The state receives this money and distributes it to local jurisdictions for projects like this grants program.

Executive Director's Report

Board members received a detailed written Executive Director's report with updates on CAA programs. Sharon noted that the new Program Manager started on Monday. Some of the navigators have had their contracts extended through March. The navigation team continues to support emergency response efforts.

The agency is working to close our several grants. Sharon reported that we will receive an increase in our CSBG funding the following year.

The Department of Environmental Protection is hosting a special film screening in February at the AFI Theater featuring Climate Stories Ambassadors' recorded stories. Several CAI graduates participated in this program and will be included in the event and panel discussion.

The Interactive Self-Sufficiency Standard is almost ready to be released to the public. The state and County reports will be available in early 2023. Sharon reported that she did a briefing about the SSS for the League of Women Voters with MCAP and Lisa Manzer from the University of Washington.

There are eleven families participating in a pilot whole family opportunity coaching program at TESS. Sharon also noted that TESS recently hosted a focus group about barriers people face accessing services. Groups were conducted in Amharic and Spanish.

Demographic reporting for VITA indicated that 73% of participants during the post-tax season were female and 43% earned less than \$10,000. The VITA program is leading training for tax season volunteers now. Two CASH Fellows were hired to work with the program.

Head Start

Board members received a detailed written Head Start report with information about the program. Charlene reported that there were five openings in Head Start classes and 275 in PreK classes. She would be conducting site visits for the following two weeks. The program is moving forward with accreditation at all schools. Planning was underway for the Head Start Party in the Park. This year's event will focus on mental health and fatherhood.

Lisa noted that staff members are receiving a lot of referrals for behavior issues and students are missing a lot of health forms. She noted that Blueprint funds were being used for more social workers, psychologists, and special educators.

Contracts

Board members received a detailed written report with updates on the agency's contract partners. Aizat noted that the annual contract partners meeting was held at WorkSource Montgomery in

Wheaton on November 15. Aizat reported that she and Melissa are processing invoices and they received several budget modifications. Aizat is working with Manna Food Center regarding funds they received from County Council. Aizat and Melissa were scheduling monitoring visits. At the visits, they can check on funds for each organization. Visits also help with the renewal process. The agency oversees both noncompetitive and base budget grants. Aizat explained that the visits show that the organizations are providing the services they are expected to provide.

Open Forum

Dr. Johnson reported that he participated in the Head Start governance training for board members. Lisa reported that she attended a different Head Start training. Timothy reported that the Office of Consumer Protection was hosting an event the following week about preventing foreclosure at Wheaton Community Center.

Betty Smith, a member of the Commission on Health who was a guest at the meeting, noted that there was a lot of overlap between the CAB's priorities and the Commission's priorities. The Commission would like to explore opportunities for collaboration.

Adjournment: The meeting ended at 6:51 pm.